

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Three (3) major arterial roadways consisting of Harford Road, Belair Road and Interstate 95 cross the study area bringing an immense flow of traffic through the Community. Interstate 95 is an eight (8) lane roadway from Emmorton Road (Route 24) in Harford County to the Baltimore Beltway interchange. Belair Road is the subject of a State Highway Administration project calling for road widening. In the Kingsville area a project as shown on Appendix A is proposed. The project will not only change the most heavily used intersection in the Community, but also will have the effect of radically changing the character of that portion of the Community along Belair Road in Kingsville.



One impact of road improvements in the Kingsville community is the isolation of the triangular area bounded by Bradshaw, Belair and Jerusalem Roads. The site formerly was occupied by a drug store, hair stylist and service station. Landscaping and planting has occurred as part of a cooperative effort between the community and the State Highway Administration. Its continued environmental and aesthetic improvement is one of the most necessary items on the Community's agenda.

The increased use of the major Community arteries has put stress on the small, rural County roads. These roads are characterized by their narrow, winding ways. There is no desire on the part of the Community to change their essential character. A priority list of stressed bridges is attached as Appendix B. Concern over possible bridge improvements needs to be further researched, but no decisions should be made without community involvement. A number of solutions such as diversion of through truck traffic away from the rural roads and improvement to existing east-west roads in communities to the north and to the south may divert east-west commuter traffic off the local, rural roads in the Community.

A design study should be undertaken by Baltimore County to determine what solutions, if any, can be found to safety concerns. The issue is one of balancing safety concerns with a preservation of rural character. Curb and gutter or galvanized barriers are not appropriate treatments. Creative solutions from other rural communities nationwide should be studied for resolution to the situation. The County should be flexible in its rural design requirements and accepting of solutions that are sensitive to the rural quality of the area as well as concerned with public safety.

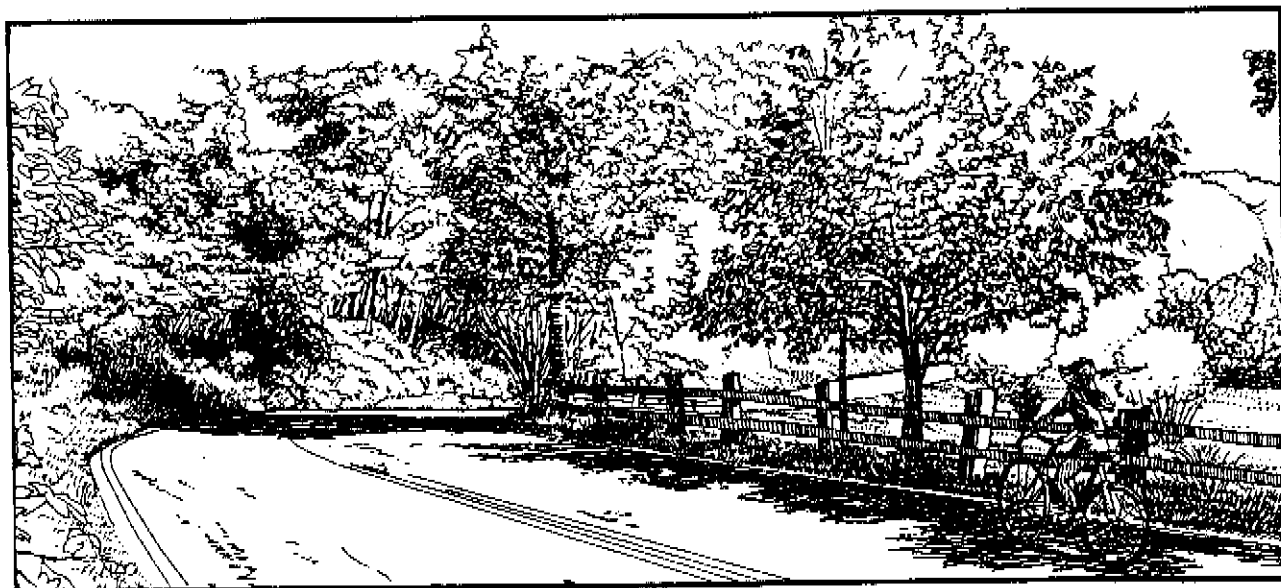
It has been suggested that the Community might seek to create bike and walking paths along some of the more heavily traveled roads. A primary concern is the destruction of the character of the area. Such paths might necessitate removal of existing trees and other rural features such as stone walls. In the event that pathways are ever considered, they should not be constructed of concrete or asphalt, but simply should be mulched.

Maintenance work on bridges in the Community also is necessary to accommodate current traffic needs, especially on Mount Vista at Broad Run and at Sweathouse Branch and on the iron truss bridge at Vinegar Hill Road. These bridges have been classified in need of repair to carry fire trucks and other heavy vehicles. Work performed on these bridges should serve as a model of the creative approach necessary in balancing safety needs with maintaining rural character of the structures. Natural materials or natural appearing materials should be used when possible to blend the bridges into the rural environment. Before doing such work community input should be sought.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

8. THAT THE COUNTY WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STATE TO EXPEDITE REMEDIATION OF THE UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CONTAMINATION AT THE KINGSVILLE TRIANGLE AND IMPROVEMENT GENERALLY TO THE ROAD NETWORK

Although the State has the primary responsibility for improvement of the triangle, the County through its Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management should monitor the progress of the remediation of the underground tank leakage and expedite any local reviews necessary as well as coordinate with the State any eventual improvements to the road network at the triangle.



Rural roads are important to the scenic character of the area.

9. THAT THE COUNTY CONTINUE WITH CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SUBSTANDARD BRIDGES IN THE COMMUNITY.

The County has identified several bridges of narrow and hazardous width (See Appendix B). Although some of the bridges have been improved, other sites remain to be repaired.

10. THAT A STUDY BE UNDERTAKEN BY BALTIMORE COUNTY TO ADDRESS SAFETY ISSUES ON THE RURAL ROADS DUE TO INCREASED TRAFFIC AS WELL AS CYCLING AND HIKING USE.

The County should study the roadways to determine methods of diverting commuter traffic from the rural roads and of enhancing their safe use.

SCHOOLS

There is one public school in the area, Kingsville Elementary School. There are two (2) parochial elementary schools, St. Paul's Lutheran School and St. Stephen's Roman Catholic School. There are no secondary schools. The Board of Education initially projected that Kingsville Elementary would not be at capacity for the next several years. That projection has proven to be falsely optimistic, and the Kingsville Elementary school has been operating over capacity since the fall of 1991. In the fall of 1993, the school was nine percent (9%) over capacity.

The Community is justly proud of the local schools. Kingsville Elementary consistently is ranked as one of the best elementary schools in the County. Portable classrooms clearly are not an appropriate alternative to expand capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

11. THAT THE PARENTS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION SHOULD BEGIN A LONG RANGE PLAN FOR NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SCHOOL OVER THE NEXT TEN (10) YEARS SO THAT EFFORTS CAN BEGIN WITHIN THE SYSTEM TO SEE THAT THE NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL ARE MET AS THEY ARISE.



AGRICULTURE

Agriculture historically has been the foundation of the Plan area. The extensive farmland in the Community enhances the area's rural character and quality of life, preserves valuable open space, and furnishes the community with local produce. Moreover, it provides a way of life for generation after generation of area residents.

Truck farming was the primary means of agriculture up through the turn of the century. As markets for truck farming declined, the agricultural base grew more diversified. Today, horse farms exist next to nurseries. Small orchards and truck farms serve the local community. A few large grain and cattle farms still exist in the area. Numerous agricultural operations exist as part-time businesses for their owners, who are active in other enterprises.

Agriculture in the area suffers from several problems brought on by its proximity to urban areas and the increased population within the community. In many instances the farms have become obscured by the developments to a point that their individual existence has become unappreciated, while at the same time the generic concept of rural farmland is the single, most attractive feature of the Community.

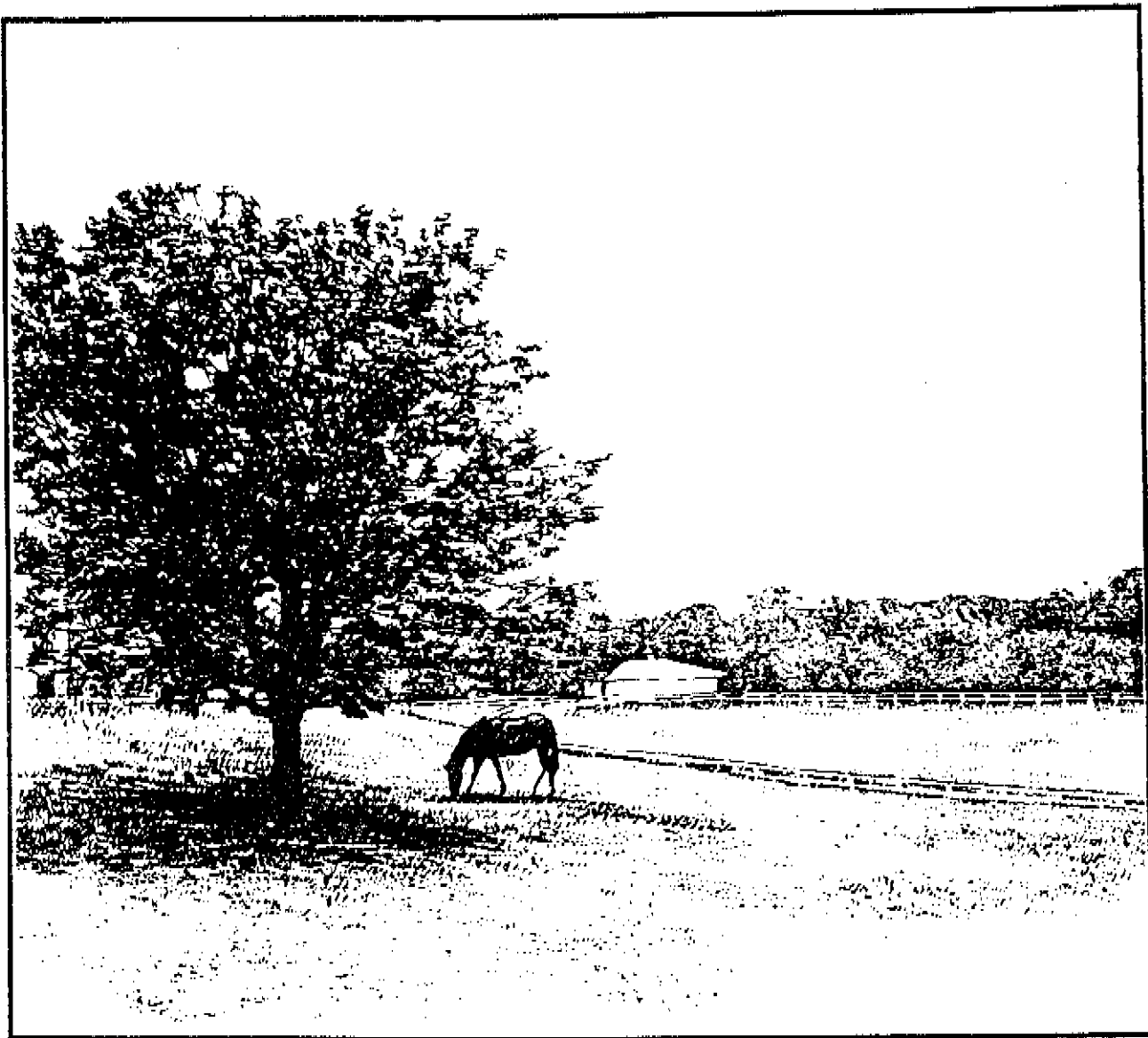
The lifestyles of non-farming residents and farmers are incompatible in many cases. This incompatibility is usually due to ignorance rather than malice. Commuting residents have little patience for the noise, smell or operations of a farm. Many people moving into the community have little idea of the true nature of farming; many are not aware of how prevalent farming is within the community.

As farms gave way to development over the last thirty (30) years, the base of support of farming as a primary occupation also eroded. Because land is expensive to purchase for farming and profit margins are low, in order to be profitable it is necessary to have large farm operations.

As the population of farmers in the area ages, farms as land use entities become more difficult to sustain. The governments tax farms in estates at market value irrespective of actual use, and as the older generations pass on, the farms are sold. The market value of land for development in the subject area is high, but the land is the farmer's savings. Smaller acreage farms have become the rule rather than the exception.

It must be recognized that for farming to continue in the community, its basic foundation must be seen as changed. The concept of the farm as providing the primary source of income can no longer exist except in rare situations. Farming can, however, be maintained in the small orchards, in the nurseries, and in the livestock farms.

It is critical that the residential community be educated about the importance of working farms to the total community environment. The rights of farmers to peaceably work their land should be emphasized. New residents, especially, should be made aware of the demands of rural life as well as its benefits through educational programs.



"...rural farmland is the single, most attractive feature of the Community".

RECOMMENDATIONS:

12. THAT RECOGNITION OF EXISTING FARMS BE IMPROVED.

A symbol, designating a Community farm, should be designed, and a sign with the name of the farm and the symbol placed on the adjacent roadways. Signs could be purchased by the Community through various service organizations and donated to farmers.

13. THAT THE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY SHOULD BE EDUCATED ABOUT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURE IN THE AREA.

A videotape tour of Community farms should be produced, copied and made widely available. It should include different types of farming in the area: truck, nursery, livestock, tree stewardship, etc. The film could demonstrate the mechanics of farming and stress the need for mutual respect between the farming and residential communities. Money to produce the tape would be sought through grants. It also is recommended that agriculture basics be provided in the curricula of area schools.

14. BALTIMORE COUNTY SHOULD ADOPT AND ENFORCE A RIGHT TO FARM LAW.

New residents, especially, should be encouraged to understand that one of the most attractive incentives for moving into the area must not be impeded from functioning smoothly and profitably.

15. THAT ANIMAL CONTROL LAWS BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.

There are laws already enacted to protect farmers and their livestock from the depredations of loose pets, but many residents and enforcement personnel in the increasing urban environment are unaware of the strictures of the laws.

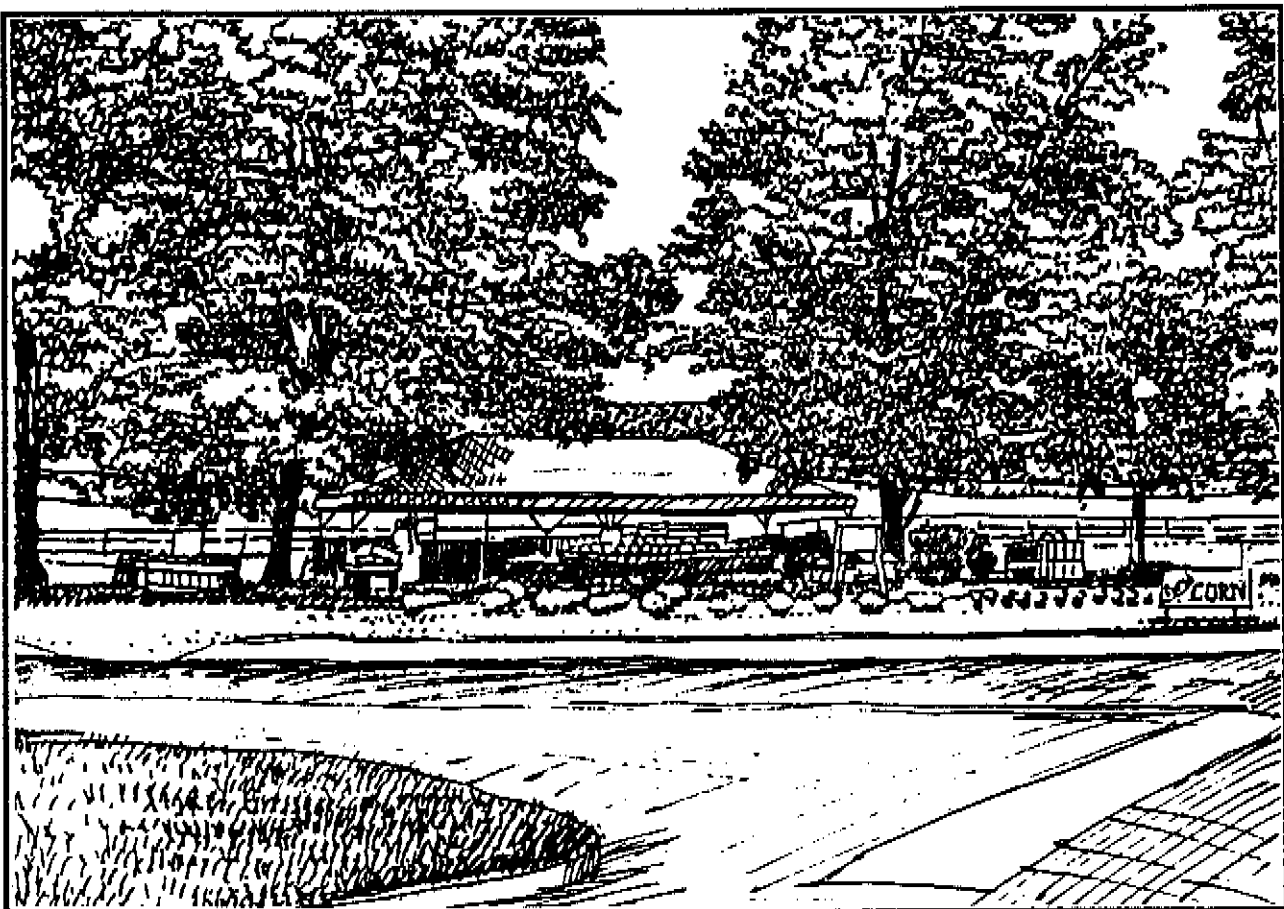
16. THAT A FARMER'S MARKET FOR AREA FARMERS BE ESTABLISHED.

An area market does not now exist in the Community. Such a market would enable the small, local farmers to display and market their produce in an economic fashion and would aid in bringing attention to this important part of the community. Criteria for a market site would include zoning to permit the sale of produce, baked goods, flowers and crafts, access to primary

roads, size to permit necessary on-site parking and buffers from neighboring tracts in order not to interfere with established residential communities. A possible site is the commercially zoned lot at the southeast corner of Harford and Sunshine roads in Fork. The site has several development constraints but has good access, and little or no demand would be placed on water or septic service.

17. THAT LOCAL FOOD MARKETS BE ENCOURAGED TO DISPLAY AND SELL LOCAL PRODUCE.

A label could be authorized to be available to all local farmers indicating the produce as local in origin. Such marketing would be introduced to local grocers again to emphasize the importance the Community gives farming in its structure.



Farm Stands display and sell local produce.